

Supporting the Needs of Adolescent Fathers during COVID-19: Opportunities for Practice and Community-Based Partnerships

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BACKGROUND

- The 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a public health crisis having serious, negative implications for vulnerable populations.
- During the pandemic, social and economic factors that contribute to adverse physical and mental health outcomes are amplified in certain populations. One such group that has been impacted are young Hispanic fathers. This group already faces limited social, economic, and organizational support at a time when they are expected to adapt to their parenting roles and provide for their child.
- The purpose of this project was to explore how young fathers' socioeconomic and emotional wellbeing have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Additionally, it sought to examine how a father-inclusive community-based program responded to the needs of families amidst the pandemic.

METHODS

- Qualitative description was the method used for this project.
- Participants were fathers who were between the ages of 18 and 24 years, who attended a community-based fatherhood program.
- Staff members were also invited to participate in the study.
- The interviews of 7 young fathers and 4 staff members were analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

RESULTS

- Though participants feared contracting COVID-19, providing for their family was their main priority, with some continuing to work.
- Concerns about the pandemic and unemployment kept other fathers in a heightened state of stress as they struggled to stay afloat while facing financial hardship.
- The fatherhood program partnered with other organizations to expand their work and continue providing essential items and support resources to families.

CONCLUSIONS

- COVID-19 offers an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the community health infrastructure so that health care providers can support the needs of this population. Health policies that fully incorporate the needs of young fathers into the web of services by federal and state agencies can help provide young fathers equal opportunity to be actively involved in the well-being of their children and families.

References

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